

of Highland, Indiana, served in the United States Army until he was discharged in September of 1945. In 1944, during the Invasion of the Rhineland, he was taken prisoner by the Nazis two days before Christmas and was liberated on April 29, 1945 by the American Forces. After twenty-seven years of faithful service, Walter O'Keefe was discharged from the United States Marine Corps with the rank of 1st Sergeant. O'Keefe hails from Dolton, Illinois where he is a father of three, grandfather of six, and has four great-grandchildren. Douglas Dettman resides in Schererville, Indiana, and served in the United States Army during the Vietnam conflict. Dettman received the Good Conduct Medal, Combat Medic Badge, Purple Heart, Vietnam Gallantry Cross with Silver Star, Distinguished Service Cross, and the Silver Cross for his valorous actions as a medical aid man.

The great sacrifice made by these eight men and those who served our country has resulted in the freedom and prosperity of our country and in countries around the world. The responsibility rests within each of us to build upon the valiant efforts that these men and women who fought for this country have displayed, so that the United States and the world will be a more free and prosperous place. To properly honor the heroism of our troops, we must make the most of our freedom secured by their efforts.

In addition to the eight veterans who are to be honored at this patriotic celebration, I would also like to commend all of those who served this country for their bravery, courage, and undying commitment to patriotism and democracy. May God bless them all.

We will forever be indebted to our veterans and their families for the sacrifices they made so that we can enjoy our freedom. Mr. Speaker, I ask that you and my colleagues join me in saluting these eight men and the other veterans who have fought for our great country.

WELCOMING THE 1999 AEA  
CLASSIC TO SAN DIEGO

**HON. RANDY "DUKE" CUNNINGHAM**  
OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, November 9, 1999*

Mr. CUNNINGHAM. Mr. Speaker, I am honored to recognize the industry, finance and media participants in the 1999 American Electronics Association (AEA) "Classic," an annual meeting linking high-tech industry leaders, entrepreneurs and financial partners that is being held this week in San Diego, California.

It is my great honor to represent one of the nation's most "wired" congressional districts. Within an hour's drive of the AEA Classic gathering lies the entire 51st Congressional District that I represent. It is also home to the global capital of wireless telecommunications, exemplified by firms such as Qualcomm, Ericsson, Motorola and, very soon, Nokia. We are also home to leading participants in the PC and electronics industries, including Gateway, Hewlett-Packard, Sony and others. Major software firms like Peregrine Systems, Intuit and Stac, integrated solutions providers like SAIC, and technologically advanced national

security industry employers like TRW, Titan, Cubic, Orincon, CSC, Jaycor, General Atomics and many others, all have either headquarters or major presences in San Diego County.

I have seen the future, and it is made in San Diego in more ways than one.

Our leading technology employers have two things in common: leading-edge ideas, backed with sufficient financing to get them to market and to prepare them for the markets of the future. This principle, bringing great ideas together with the business know-how and the financing necessary to make them succeed, is the motivating purpose for the annual AEA Classic.

The jobs and economic opportunities of the future are being made today at meetings like the AEA Classic, in San Diego today. They are not being created by the government or by regulators or by bureaucrats, but by entrepreneurs with dreams, and by people with resources to make these dreams real. To ensure that these innovations keep coming, I believe that we need to work together to improve education in every community for every person. And we need to keep the long, taxing arm of the federal government out of the way.

The AEA Classic meeting in San Diego deserves Members' attention, because their next purchase, their constituents' next job, or the technology for their next phone call may well depend on its success. Thank you, Mr. Speaker, for permitting me to take note of a major force in the development of America's dynamic high-tech industry.

IN OBSERVANCE OF DUTCH  
AMERICAN HERITAGE DAY

**HON. PETER HOEKSTRA**

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, November 9, 1999*

Mr. HOEKSTRA. Mr. Speaker, on November 17, 1776, a small American warship, the *Andrew Doria*, sailed into the harbor of the island of Saint Eustatius in the West Indies, which is a colony of the Netherlands. Only four months before, the United States had declared its independence from Great Britain. The American crew was delighted when the island's governor, Johannes DeGraaf, ordered that his fort's cannons be fired in a friendly salute. As this was first-ever military salute given by a foreign power to the flag of the United States, it was a risky and courageous act. The British seized the island a few years later. DeGraaf's welcoming salute was a sign of respect, and today it continues to symbolize the deep ties of friendship that exist between the United States and the Netherlands.

After more than 200 years, the bonds between the United States and the Netherlands remain strong. Our diplomatic ties, in fact, constitute one of our longest unbroken diplomatic relationships with any foreign country. Fifty years ago, during the Second World War, American and Dutch men and women fought side by side to defend the cause of freedom and democracy. As NATO allies, we have continued to stand together to keep the transatlantic partnership strong and to maintain the peace and security of Europe. In the Persian

Gulf we joined as coalition partners to repel aggression and to uphold the rule of law.

While the ties between the United States and the Netherlands have been tested by time and by the crucible of armed conflict, Dutch-American heritage is even older than our official relationship. It dates back to the early 17th century, when the Dutch West Indies Company founded New Netherland and its main settlements, New Amsterdam and Fort Orange—today known as New York City and Albany. From the earliest days of our Republic, men and women of Dutch ancestry have made important contributions to American history and culture. The influence of our Dutch ancestors can still be seen not only in New York's Hudson River Valley but also in communities like Holland, Michigan; Pella, Iowa; Lyden, Washington; and Bellflower, California—where many people trace their roots to settlers from the Netherlands.

Generations of Dutch immigrants have enriched the United States with the unique customs and traditions of their ancestral homeland—a country that has given the world great artists and celebrated philosophers.

On this occasion, we also remember many celebrated American leaders of Dutch descent. At least three presidents, Martin VanBuren, Theodore Roosevelt and Franklin D. Roosevelt, came from Dutch stock. Our Dutch heritage is seen not only in our people but also in our experience as a nation. Our traditions of religious freedom and tolerance, for example, have spiritual and legal roots among such early settlers as the English Pilgrims and the French Huguenots, who first found refuge from persecution in Holland. The Dutch Republic was among those systems of government that inspired our nation's Founders as they shaped our Constitution.

In celebration of the long-standing friendship that exists between the United States and the Netherlands, and in recognition of the many contributions that Dutch Americans have made to our country, we observe Dutch American Heritage day on November 16. I salute the more than 8 million Americans of Dutch descent and the 16 million people of the Netherlands in celebration of this joyous occasion.

CLARIFYING OVERTIME  
EXEMPTION FOR FIREFIGHTERS

SPEECH OF

**HON. CURT WELDON**

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, November 4, 1999*

Mr. WELDON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of this legislation. I commend the gentleman from Maryland for introducing this bill, and as a former firefighter, appreciate his initiatives to help the firefighters of our nation.

This bill would clarify the overtime exemption for full time firefighters and EMS personnel. This would apply to all firefighters, paramedics, emergency medical technicians (EMS), rescue workers, ambulance personnel, and hazardous materials workers who are employed by a municipality, county, fire district, or state fire department. As the founder of the

Congressional Fire and Emergency Services Caucus, and one who has continually kept informed on these issues, I realize the importance of this bill. By giving these men and women the opportunity to be treated fairly in the workplace, we are recognizing that firefighters and EMS personnel are employees that deserve overtime for their valiant efforts. These individuals are professionally trained in fire suppression, and work to keep our communities safe.

Every day across America the story is the same: public officers—be they firefighters, emergency services personnel, or law enforcement officials—leave their families to join the thin red and blue line that protects us from harm. They put their lives on the line as a shield between death and the precious gift of life. Mr. Speaker, I know the dedication of our men and women in the fire community, and know the risks they take each day they do their job.

As we all know, recent Court rulings have stated the EMS personnel do not qualify for the overtime exemption in the Fair Labor Standards Act because the bulk of their time is spent doing non-fire protection activities. This is absurd. During working hours, these men and women sit on alert for the calls that come in, and spend their time working on their fire stations. This legislation is long overdue, and I believe that we are taking the right steps by granting our firefighters this overtime status.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank my colleague from Maryland for introducing this important piece of legislation, and I look forward to working with him again on other fire related issues.

HONORING DR. EDOUARD JOSEPH  
HAZEL

HON. EDOLPHUS TOWNS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, November 9, 1999*

Mr. TOWNS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Dr. Edouard Joseph Hazel, an international leader in medicine.

Edouard Joseph Hazel was born on November 10, 1951, in Port-au-Prince, Haiti, the third largest Caribbean country. Dr. Hazel went to private schools and joined the School of Medicine of the State University of Haiti. He graduated in 1975, and moved to the United States where he obtained his Board Certification in Internal Medicine and Infectious Disease.

Dr. Hazel is currently the Acting Chief of the Department of Medicine of Coler Hospital, where he was instrumental in establishing the first long-term program for patients infected with the HIV virus. In spite of his busy schedule with this municipal hospital, Dr. Hazel is also completing a term as the President of the New York State Chapter of the Association of Haitian Physicians Abroad, and is the current general secretary for the national committee of this organization of some 2,000 American physicians.

Dr. Hazel is at the forefront of the movement that ultimately defeated discriminatory

policies and practices of the FDA and the CDC against Haitian Americans who were singled out as the carriers of the HIV virus. During his tenure, he visited the U.S. Base of Guantanamo, Cuba, where HIV-infected Haitian refugees were held and helped articulate the legal argument to ensure that this group received appropriate medical care. He was also one of the first scientists who recognized the danger that the HIV virus could represent for people of color all over the world.

Dr. Hazel also understands the importance of coalition building and works closely with numerous organizations such as the Hispanic American Physician Association, the Providence Society, the local chapter of the National Medical Association, and the Caribbean Health Association, to name a few. Dr. Hazel is also the current Director of the Visiting Physician Program of the Health and Hospital Corporation at Coler Goldwater Hospital, a program that has provided extensive training in the diagnosis and the management of transmissible diseases to physicians practicing in the Dominican Republic.

Fully aware of the changes taking place in the health care industry, Dr. Hazel has been vehemently working to increase the participation of minority professionals in shaping a better health care system.

Mr. Speaker, I would like you and my colleagues from both sides of the aisle to join me in honoring Dr. Edouard Joseph Hazel.

MEDICARE, MEDICAID AND SCHIP  
BALANCED BUDGET REFINEMENT ACT OF 1999

SPEECH OF

HON. JIM RYUN

OF KANSAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, November 5, 1999*

Mr. RYUN of Kansas. Mr. Speaker, I have heard over and over from the health care professionals and the Medicare patients in the 2nd District of Kansas about how devastating the unintended consequences of the Balanced Budget Act have been on the Medicare system.

The BBA's attempt to reduce waste and fraud and prolong the life of Medicare by reducing reimbursements has unfortunately resulted in less care per patient, especially in rural Kansas. From 1997 to 1998 the average reimbursement per patient in Kansas dropped from \$4,060 to \$2,642 and the average number of visits per patient dropped from 65 to 42. We can be certain that these figures do not reflect a sudden dramatic increase in healthy seniors.

Too many seniors have watched their rural hospital or home health clinic close or are denied care as a result of the budget cuts. In Kansas alone, 60 Home Health Agencies have closed their doors over the last two years. It's time for us to reverse the Balanced Budget Act's death sentence on Medicare and the Health Care Financing Administration's poor interpretation of the Act.

I was particularly pleased when Chairman THOMAS, the author of this bill, came to Kansas to hear first hand the concerns of health

care providers in my district. I know the Chairman took these concerns and so many others from around the country into consideration when he drafted this legislation.

The Medicare Balanced Budget Refinement Act is a positive step toward halting the closing of home health agencies and rural hospitals and will ensure greater patient access to quality care. Particularly significant to keeping the doors of home health agencies open is the delay of the 15% payment reduction until a year after implementation of the prospective payment system. The Act also recognizes the paperwork burden the OASIS questionnaire places on nurses and agency staff and provides a \$10 payment for each patient requiring this paperwork. The Medicare cuts for home health agencies were deep, and we cannot continue to expect agencies to do more with less. More importantly, many seniors will be able to remain in their homes rather than checking into hospitals and nursing homes.

Small rural hospitals have also suffered from the BBA as their limited budgets have been stretched thin. The Medicare Balanced Budget Refinement Act assists small rural hospitals with the cost of transition to the new prospective payment system through the availability of up to \$50,000 in grants to purchase computers, train staff and cover other cost associated with the transition. The Act eliminates the requirement for states to review the need for swing beds through the Certificate of Need (CON) process. It also eliminates the 5 constraints on length of stay providing flexibility for hospitals with under 100 beds to participate more extensively in the Medicare swing bed program.

Mr. Speaker, I voted against the Balanced Budget Act in 1997 largely because of the negative impact it would have on rural health care. I support H.R. 3075 because it goes a long way to correct the problems with the current system.

CONFERENCE REPORT ON S. 900,  
GRAMM-LEACH-BLILEY ACT

SPEECH OF

HON. EDWARD R. ROYCE

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, November 4, 1999*

Mr. ROYCE. Madam Speaker, the historic legislation that we are considering today, is a win for the consumer, a win for the U.S. economy and a win for America's international competitive position abroad.

American consumers will benefit from increased access, better services, greater convenience and lower costs. They will be offered the convenience of handling their banking, insurance and securities activities at one location. More importantly, with the efficiencies that could be realized from increased competition among banks, insurance, and securities providers under this proposal, consumers could ultimately save an estimated \$18 billion annually.

Federal Reserve Chairman Alan Greenspan has stated that "Consumers of financial services are denied the lower prices, increased access and higher quality services that would